to show the masons how to get the work done with less expenditure have been established.

SHRI G. SWAMINATHAN: May be a centre is there in Delhi, but there is no such centre at the State level.

SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM: Most of the States are having building centres. That is very successful in Kerala. We have centres in Tamil Nadu also.

SHRI G. G. SWELL: It has been said that our thermal plants in the country generate a lot of radio-activity. If you take all thermal plants into consideration, there is more radio-activity from our thermal plants than what it is from our nuclear plants. Much of the radio-activity may be in fly ash. Has this aspect been considered? Is it true? Has the question of presence of radio-activity in fly ash been considered before you use it for buildings.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: It has not been brought to my notice that there is radio-activity in the fly ash. We will have to find out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You find out and see if there is radio-activity in it.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: The science people will do it, the technology people will do it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You ask them to find out. Mr. Swell has said that there is radio-activity in it. They should find out and you will see to it.

SHRIMATI SHEILA KAUL: Yes, Sir. I will do.

Decentralisation of Food Corporation of India

*422. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to decentralise the functioning of Food Corporation of India; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether it is a fact that most of the State Governments are un-happy with the working of the Corporation, if so, the number of complaints received against the Corporation from the State Governments during the last two years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD (SHRI TARUN GOGOI): (a) There is adequate decentralisation in the functioning of the Food Corporation of India.

(b) There are no complaints or expression of unhappiness from the State Governments about the working of the Corporation as a whole.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: The hon. Minister has very briefly said about 'adequate decentralisation'. This is a well-known fact that FCI has become a white elephant. I would request him to please elaborate what kind of decentralisation has already taken place or if there is a plan for further decentralisation. I would also like to know whether any complaints of shortages in any States have been received. If so, what are those States? Particularly in Tripura there were a lot of reports that in tribal areas there were deaths because of lack of foodgrains. During my last three or four visits there I have been told that there were shortages of foodgrains and the FCI was entirely responsible for it. I would like to know if the Minister has received such reports. What was the quantity of rice demanded by Tripura, what was the quantity was allotted to them and what was actually delivered to them in the current year? Similarly, for Rajasthan also what was the quantity desired, what was allotted and what was actually supplied?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: So far as decentralisation is concerned, there are five zones, 19 regional offices and 169 districts. Food has to be procured in different parts of the country. We cannot have a centralised agency for the purpose of procurement. At the moment there is no plan for further decentralisation. (*Interruptions*) Powers have been delegated of the Zonal Manager, Senior Manager, Manager and District Manager also. As regards the complaints, yes, we do receive complaints.

It is not that we don't receive any complaints about the short supply and all that. This year our allocation is 112 lakh tonnes. It is more than the last year. With regard to rice it is 18 lakh tonnes more than the previous year. The same is the case about wheat also. It is 18 lakh tonnes more than the previous year... (*Interruptions*)... I do receive complaints. I received a complaint from the hon. Minister, Mr. Santosh Mohan Dev also. There are problems. We are trying to help them.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: There are deaths in Tripura. I would like to know, how much quantity has been supplied. What was their demand? When are you going to supply the balance of foodgrains? Similarly, for Rajasthan also... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: Even for Rajasthan also, we have reduced the quota. In the month of December, for the whole of India, we have reduced the quota by ten per cent. Normally we increase the quota from August to October. Then from December we have to decrease it by 10 per cent because of the harvest season. In the meantime, I have increased the quota for Rajasthan laso. If any request comes from Rajasthan, if there is a genuine problem, I will consider it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Will you consider Tripura also?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: Tripura also; it is my area.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: My first question has not been replied to. If you think that you are satisfied, I am also satisfied.

My second supplementary iis, there is a lot of pilferage in transit and adulteration in transit. Therefore, a decision was taken by the earlier Government about three or four years ago that 100 per cent foodgrain bags will be machine-stitched. Is this true? If so, what efforts his Ministry has made during the last two or three years for getting the bags machine-stitched? If so, what has been the result? In spite of the decision taken by the Government, why has it failed? Is it due to the impractical limit of incentive charges being adhered to by the Government for the FCI or is the Government planning to give a free leverage to the FCI with a guarantee that 100 per cent bags must be machine-stitched all over the country?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: We have not yet taken a decision with regard to the machine-stitched bags.

For Karnataka it is 84 per cent, Andhra Pradesh 71 per cent, Punjab 12 per cent and Haryana 4 per cent. In the meantime we have increased the incentive from 30 paise to 90 paise per bag of wheat.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: I would like to know, is he willing to take a practical approach? This incentive is not practical. He must give the FCI a free hand so that we can have 100 per cent machine-stitched bags at the lowest cost possible. Why should we put a limit? That is what he has not answered.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: We have not yet taken a decision about the compulsory stitching of bags with machine... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: I have got a written report saying that 100 per cent machine-stitched bags should be there. It is the policy of the Government. But the Minister says, it is not there.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has not passed the order. He will look into it.

श्री शान्ति त्यागी : श्रीमन, कभी कभी ऐसा होता है कि अप्रैल या मई में जब गेहूं की फसल काटी जाती है तो बेमौसम बारिश हो जाती है जिससे बहुत सा गेहूं भीग जाता है और गेहूं का रंग बदल जाता है। किसान जब एफ०सी०आई० के परचेजिंग सेंटर्स पर उस गेहूं को लेकर जाता है तो वे लोग उसको लेने से इंकार करते हैं। उसी गेहूं को व्यापारी मनमाने दाम पर किसानों से खरीदता है और बाद में उसी घटिया किस्म के गेहूं को वह एफ०सी०आई० को बढ़े रेट पर बेच देता है। क्या आपको ऐसी शिकायतें मिली हैं? यदि मिली हैं तो आपने क्या ऐक्शन लिया है ?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: There is a quality control department. We don't buy sub-standard wheat. Whatever we allot to the State Government, they have a right to reject it before they take the delivery. If they are not satisfied, they can reject it.

डा० बापू कालदाते : सभापति जी, एक तो उनको जो पहला जवाब है उससे मैं संतुष्ट नहीं हूं कि सिर्फ 19 जोन बनाए गए हैं...

श्री सभापति : आपने पूरा सुना था जो वह कह रहे थे या बातें कर रहे थे ?

डा० बापू कालदाते : सुनने के बाद बात कर रहा था कि क्या पूछूं ? यह जो जोन बनाने की बात है इसमें डिसेंट्रलाइजेशन की बात कही गई है ।

"Decentralisation" means delegation of power. The problem is that you have stated that you have got 19 zones but what kind of power have you delegated to the centralised zones? That is one point.

The second point is, have you received any complaint from Maharashtra saying that the FCI, instead of giving the requirement of the State to the State Government, is selling it to the private traders? As you know, Sir, Maharashtra is in the grip of drought situation. May I know from the Minister why the FCI is selling it to the private traders instead of sending it to the State Government?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: As regards the delegation of powers, it is the Zones which receive procured foodgrains and store them. The procurement has to be done in different States. The storage has to be done in different States. So is the case of movement of foodgrains also.

As regards Maharashtra, FCI has sold about 2 lakh tonnes of wheat in the month of October and December to private traders.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Why?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: In order to check the prices, it has been decided to do that.

DR. BAPU KALDATE: Are you sure that the traders are selling at the same price?

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: We are giving it to State Civil Supplies Corporations. We are giving it to private traders. We are giving it to flour mills also. We are always prepared to supply to civil supplies corporations. If they buy, we are prepared to give them.

DR BAPU KALDATE: The requirement of the Government is very much. Are you going to stop selling to private traders? (*Interruptions*).

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir, the Food Corporation of India is doing three jobs; procuring, storing and distributing. As far as procurement is concerned, a lot of complaints are there from various State Governments. I will give a simple example to the hon. Minister. We are getting plenty of paddy from Karaikkal in Pondicherry. Thanjavur is the rice bowl of Tamil Nadu. During the procurement season, when the harvest is over, farmers are approaching the procurement centres for them to purchase paddy from them because the Food Corporation of India is acting as a catalyst institution for the purpose of procuring paddy at the time of harvest. What they are actually doing is, at the time of sowing season, they go for procurement. In the meanwhile, the middlemen, private traders get it at throw-away prices from the farmers. Therefore, the procurement system is not all right in the Food Corporation of India. Whenever the State Government writes to them, the zonal offices say that they have to write to the Centre to get the clearance. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether they will take immediate measures for the purpose of procurement of paddy or wheat whenever it is harvest season and not in the sowing season.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: Sir, I am not aware of it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will look into it.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: Yes, Sir It is our intention to procure. I have been impressing upon all the Chief Ministers to procure more and more paddy and rice.

श्री रामदास अग्रवाल : सभापति जी, आपके माध्यम से मंत्री महोदय से यह कहना चाहता हूं कि एक तरफ तो यह घोषणा की गई थी कि फूड कारपोरेशन के पास अनाज का बड़ा भंडार है और दूसरी ओर आज भी मंत्री महोदय ने बताया इसके पहले भी अखबारों में यह बात आ चुकी है कि हरेक स्टेट गवर्नमेंट को उन्होंने सूचित भी कर दिया है कि सितम्बर से लेकर दिसम्बर तक की जो सप्लाई है उसमें दस परसेंट की कटौती की गई है । मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि कटौती करते समय जहां पर अकाल है, अभाव है उनका ध्यान क्यों नहीं रखा गया ? क्या आपके पास अनाज की कमी है इसलिए आपने कटौती की है या केवल बाजार में फूड कारपोरेशन अपना प्रोक्योर किये अनाज को बेच सके और उस पर मुनाफा कमाकर अपना नुकसान पूरा कर सके इसलिए यह कटौती की है ? मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि आखिर जहां अभाव है, अकाल है वहां पर कटौती क्यों की गई ? और फूड कारपोरेशन को बाजार में माल बेचने की अनुमति क्यों दी जा रही है ? इन बातों का मैं मंत्री महोदय से स्पष्टीकरण चाहता हूं ।

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: As I have already stated, in view of the increased production, we have already increased the allocation. It is the normal practice. It has been going on for so many years. During the lean seasons we give more and during the harvest season, we do reduce it. But whenever there is a problem, we always take care, whether it is Rajasthan or any other State. We will increase it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He asks when there is scarcity, why you cut it and whether you will restore it.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: I will restore it. Whenever there is any problem, we will take care of it. We have already increased it to Rajasthan last month by 5000 tonnes.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Sir, the Food Corporation suffers from the lack of adequate storage capaciy. Two or three years back, they had undertaken construction of a large number of godowns in various States. Would the Minister be kind enough to say how many godowns have been planned, how many of them have been completed by now and how many are pending. The next part of my question is whether the Food Corporation is meeting its obligation to supply the quantity of foodgrains required for the Public Distribution System in the various States, particularly in Andhra Pradesh where the 'two-rupee a Kg. scheme is in operation.

SHRI TARUN GOGOI: We have got a total capacity of 226 in the country. Out of that, covered capacity is 198; CAPS is 28.55. We have got a total of 226; stocked is 154;68 per cent. Of course, there are some places where there is shortage of capacity. Whenever there is a problem, we will take care of it.

Replacement of telephone exchanges in Gujarat

*423. SHRI RAJUBHAI A PARMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of old manual exchanges (M.S.T.D.) in Gujarat;

(b) the number of exchanges which the proposed to be changed from manual to automatic ones; in the near future; and

(c) by when all the manually-operated exchanges in Gujarat are likely to be replaced?